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AIR INDIA CUTS CABIN BAGGAGE ALLOWANCE FOR DOMESTIC FLIGHTS

For the lowest economy fare ticket, only 15 kg of free baggage will be allowed henceforth by the airline, down from the earlier 20 kg upper limit

NO CHANGE FOR BUSINESS CLASS FLIERS

The airline offers three price slabs in the economy class — Comfort, Comfort Plus and Flex. For Comfort and Comfort Plus, the free baggage allowance has been cut to 15 kg from 20 kg and 25 kg. But Flex passengers can have 25 kg baggage. Business class fliers can continue to carry 25-35 kg baggage depending on the route. New baggage rules kicked in on Thursday

FLEX FARE COMES WITH A LOT OF BENEFITS

- Last year, the company introduced a menu-based pricing model. The price difference between Comfort Plus and Flex fares would typically be around ₹1,000 in a domestic sector like Delhi-Mumbai, the airline said
- Explaining the new rules, the spokesperson said the Flex fares would provide 10 kg extra baggage, zero fees for cancellation and more loyalty points

May 16th

AIR INDIA TO RESUME FLIGHTS BETWEEN DELHI-TEL AVIV WITH FIVE WEEKLY FLIGHTS

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

U.P. DIARIES

THE CITY THAT IS NO LONGER ALLAHABAD

SANTWANA BHATTACHARYA
EDITOR

PRAYAGRAJ: The city that has been renamed Prayagraj lives in nostalgia and denial. Denial about its lost significance on the political map of Uttar Pradesh and, by that stretch, of India. As if it's going through a slow unravelling — a crisis of identity. A century ago, it was a melting pot of nationalistic ferment, the nursery of future prime ministers. Indeed, the first social-political-cultural hub of modern UP. The slide from that was long but irreversible. But it's evident in the changed crowd at the coffee house, in the inarticulate anger of the youth. The nature of discourse too reflects grey, contemporary realities.

Witness that mutation in the political vocabulary, from overarching tropes to a more caste-based analysis of elections, even as metaphor. Not surprising that someone in this city — reduced to basics amidst brash, hypermodern shopping arcades — explains complexities thus: "Narendra Modi may be from an OBC community, but comes across as a savarna, whereas Mamata, a Banerjee Brahmin, does her politics like a subaltern." This is by way of explaining why Modi has appeal in a constituency that has 4.5 lakh savarna voters — majority Brahmin at that.

That's why the contest between two dynasts for the Allahabad seat — Neeraj Tripathi (BJP), son of late Keshari Nath Tripathi, former Governor of West Bengal, and Ujjwal Raman Singh (Congress), son of Kunwar Reoti Raman Singh — could well be settled by the Modi factor.

No irony there. No one raises the issue of dynastic politics in a city whose claim to fame is its association with the Nehru-Gandhi family. Their old homes, Swaraj Bhawan and Anand Bhawan, are now given over to a trust. That legacy has no political pull left, though. "They've no connect with Allahabad or its people any more. Even when Rahul or Priyanka Gandhi come here, they drive straight to Anand Bhawan and simply disappear," says M P Dubey, former professor of Political Science, Allahabad University.

DECIDE
SECOND OF A FOUR-PART SERIES

A contrasting anecdote is recounted about Lal Bahadur Shastri and how he used to reach out to people and even opponents at streetcorners.

The Nehru family's connect with the city broke with Indira Gandhi's passing. Their political hold was over when Rajiv Gandhi's apolitical friend famously entered and exited politics through this city.

CONTINUED ON: P11

No bail, Revanna in SIT custody

He was picked up from his father and former PM Deve Gowda's house in Bengaluru

PRAVEEN KUMAR @ Bengaluru

THE Special Investigation Team (SIT) on Saturday evening arrested Holenarasipur MLA HD Revanna in the kidnap case registered against him at KR Nagar police station in Mysuru district by the son of one of the victims of the alleged sexual abuse involving the MLA and his son and Hassan MP Prajwal Revanna.

Two FIRs were registered against Revanna. The first on a complaint of sexual harassment filed by one of the victims in Holenarasipur town police station in Hassan district on April 28. The second based on a kidnap complaint filed by another victim's 20-year-old son on May 2 in KR Nagar police station, for which Revanna was arrested.

> I will not interfere in the arrest of MLA Revanna in the kidnap case, as action has to be taken against the accused as per law
>
> Siddaramaiah, Chief Minister

Revanna was picked up by the SIT from his father and former PM HD Deve Gowda's house at Padmanabhanagar in Bengaluru after his anticipatory bail was rejected by the People's Representative Court.

Minutes after the bail application was rejected, a team of SIT officials headed by SP CA Simon went to Deve Gowda's house.

The SIT was trailing Revanna after he left Holenarasipura four days ago saying that he would not run away, but fight the case legally.

The SIT kept a hawk's eye on him to ensure he did not escape. The officials were waiting for the court's order. After the court denied him anticipatory bail, the SIT officers, who were there, immediately informed their colleagues — who were already positioned near Deve Gowda's house — to move ahead and arrest Revanna. The SIT had credible information that Revanna was in his father's house. A team of five SIT officials, in two vehicles, rushed to Deve Gowda's house.

CONTINUED ON: P4

MLA HD Revanna being taken by SIT personnel from the residence of his father and former PM HD Deve Gowda in Bengaluru on Saturday | EXPRESS

SIT approaches CBI for 'Blue Corner Notice'

Bengaluru: The SIT, which is probing the alleged rape and sexual harassment cases against Hassan MP Prajwal Revanna, has approached the CBI to issue a Blue Corner Notice against the MP. He is said to have gone to Germany on April 27 | P4

Woman rescued from farmhouse of MLA's PA

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Mysuru

THE Special Investigation Team (SIT) on Saturday rescued the woman, who was allegedly kidnapped by senior JDS leader and Holenarsipur MLA HD Revanna's aide on April 29 and held captive in a farmhouse at Kalenahalli village in Hunsur taluk.

Based on the information given by Revanna's relative Satish Babu, who is now in judicial custody, sleuths of SIT raided the farmhouse of MLA's personal assistant Rajashekar in the village and rescued the woman.

It is said that Rajashekar managed to escape from the farmhouse just before the team landed there. After the raid, the sleuths brought the woman to Bengaluru in the afternoon. The sleuths launched an operation to trace the woman after her son Raju filed a complaint at KR Nagar police station on May 2 against Revanna and his son Prajwal Revanna. In his complaint, Raju stated that his mother, who worked in Revanna's house for six years, returned home three years ago. She is one of the victims of sexual abuse by Prajwal. Babu kidnapped his mother on April 29 on the advice of Revanna, Raju alleged.

India waiting for Canada info on arrests in Nijjar case: EAM

BIJOY PRADHAN @ Bhubaneswar

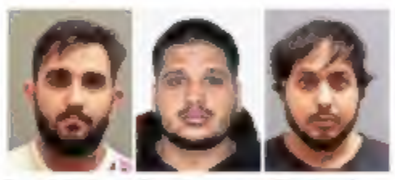
A day after Canada police claimed to have arrested three Indian nationals over the killing of Khalistani terrorist Hardeep Singh Nijjar last year, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Saturday said India is waiting for details from Canadian government or the police on the development.

In an interaction with the media during his two-day visit to state, Jaishankar said the three arrested persons were apparently Indians having some kind of gang background. But he was yet to get any details.

"We have never been given any proof by the Canada government. In fact, we have repeatedly told them if they have something, share with us. I am waiting for the Canada police to tell us more (about the persons they have arrested)," he said and added that they must produce proof if they do not have any political agenda.

Jaishankar said, "One of our major concerns is that they (Canada) have allowed organised crime from their soil. They have given political legitimacy to Khalistani elements and underground gangsters for vote bank politics."

"We have been telling them if you give political legitimacy to such elements it will be a problem for you and us. But Canada Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is doing vote bank politics to save his government," the minister said. Jaishankar said India has taken up issues on Khalistanis in Canada in great detail. The Canada government has a lot of knowledge about the Khalistanis living there but has chosen not to do anything. "Even our extradition requests are pending with them for a long time," he said.



From left: Karan Brar, Karanpreet Singh and Kamalpreet Singh arrested in Canada | P11

EXPRESS READ

One IAF personnel killed in terror attack

Jammu: An IAF personnel was killed and four others were injured in a terror attack in Jammu's Poonch district on Saturday evening. Terrorists opened fire at two vehicles carrying IAF personnel near Shahsitar around 6pm. The area, where the attack took place, is between Surankote's Sanai Top and Mendhar's Gursai in the border district. The injured personnel were shifted to Udhampur for treatment on IAF choppers, where one of them succumbed. An IAF detachment is co-located with the 37 Rashtriya Rifles in the Mendhar region.

FAF-TASTIC

RCB skipper Faf du Plessis drives on way to his 23-ball 64 in the IPL match against Gujarat Titans in Bengaluru on Saturday. RCB struggled to go past a meagre target of 148, winning by 4 wickets | VINOOKUMAR T | P19

Union min, 2 MLAs from same party in rare contest

SWETHAVIMALA M @ Hyderabad

IN the narrow lanes and bylanes of Secunderabad, there are striking black-and-gold engravings that read: "Foundation stone laid by T Padma Rao Goud; Guest of Honour: G Kishan Reddy". While the latter is the sitting BJP MP from Secunderabad, the former is a BRS MLA from the Assembly segment bearing the same name.

In the Lok Sabha elections in Secunderabad, Goud, Reddy and BRS MLA Danam Nagender are locked in a tricornered contest. Nagender, who won on a BRS ticket from Khairatabad Assembly segment in the December 2023 Assembly polls, jumped ship — but hasn't yet resigned as a legislator — and is now contesting on a Congress ticket.

All the three candidates have years of political experience. Kishan Reddy is the state BJP president and a Union minister; Padma Rao is a four-time MLA and former state minister; and Nagender is a six-time MLA. Internal surveys of the parties currently place Kishan slightly ahead of Nagender, with the BRS candidate a close third.

In the Secunderabad and Musheerabad assembly segments, there is support for the BRS with some voters even calling it a fight between the BJP and the pink party.

"Danam has been switching parties every now and then. He was in Congress, then TDP, then Congress again, then BRS, now back in Congress," said Satyanarayana, a 70-year-old resident of Khairatabad.

For his part, Nagender told this newspaper, "My career started in the Congress. People recognise my service and will give a befitting reply to the BJP." Despite his party-hopping, Nagender, appears to enjoy the support of the minorities. For instance, a Muslim voter in Nampally said his vote would go to Nagender. "I'll vote either for *patang* (kite) or Congress. The constituency is home to over 20 lakh voters, 27.4% of whom are Muslims.

Another voter, Rajesh (40), a juice vendor in Musheerabad, said, "There is anti-incumbency against the BJP and Danam might benefit from it."

Former captain of the Indian cricket team Mohammed Azharuddin, who has been campaigning along with Nagender, said that he was confident the Congress will wrest Secunderabad. Azhar, who was the party candidate from the Jubilee Hills Assembly segment in the 2023 elections, told this newspaper, "Kishan Reddy has not done anything. I don't think he spent his MP funds properly."

Speaking to this newspaper during the Hyderabad Dialogues recently, Kishan said, "The Modi government has done a lot for the state. The Centre spent about ₹10 lakh crore in Telangana."

However, there are also voters who said Kishan is not accessible whereas the BRS candidate is a grassroots leader. "Padma Rao walks around our road, waves at me and asks how I'm doing; but we cannot expect that from Kishan Reddy," a voter in Secunderabad said.

At KBR National Park in Jubilee Hills, a brisk morning walker said, "In this part of the city, we mostly know Kishan Reddy and Danam's work. In the other part, they would probably support Padma Rao. Whoever comes to power, just make sure you take care of the traffic, roads and other civic issues," he sighed.

SHOWTIME FOR GLADIATORS

ILLUSTRATION: HARIHAR PARSHURAM

From left, T Padma Rao Goud, Danam Nagender and G Kishan Reddy

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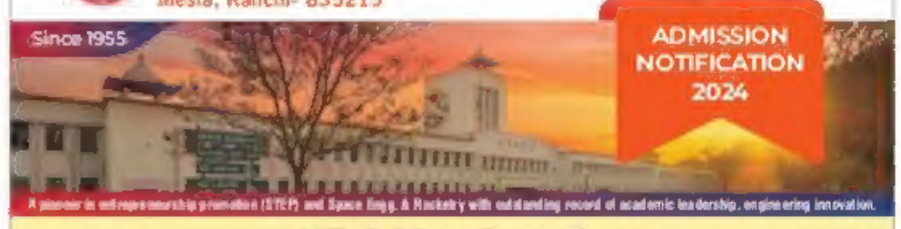

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